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FILE ONLY

# Pilot says rescue try would fail

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BEIRUT — The captain of hijacked Trans World Airlines Flight 847 said yesterday that he was being treated well but feared "we would all be dead men" should the United States try to rescue him and the 40 or so remaining American hostages being held nearby.

There was no apparent progress in private talks aimed at freeing the hostages.

In a brief exchange from his cockpit window yesterday with four reporters standing on the airport tarmac, Capt. John L. Testrake of Richmond, Mo., said as his captors held a gun on him that he had been told that the other hostages had "been taken to a safe place, that they're comfortable and being well taken care of."

"I think we would all be dead men" should any rescue be tried "because we are continually surrounded by many, many guards," Testrake said in response to a question from an ABC-TV reporter who was among the journalists taken to the jetliner by a representative of the Shiite Muslim Amal militia. A bearded guard aboard the plane fired a half-dozen rifle shots into the air just before the exchange began, and pistols were waved at both the reporters and the captain during the interview.

As the sixth day of the hostage crisis passed with no apparent change in the arms-length negotiations among the United States, Israel, Amal and others concerning the hijackers' basic demand that Lebanese Shiites held in Israel be freed, life on the plane was assuming a routine, Testrake said.

"It's just a case of wait and see what happens," he said. So we've just been doing housekeeping in the aircraft," where only three crew members and a changing contingent of guards remained, he said.

In Washington, the Reagan administration said yesterday that it was determined to gain the swift release of the hostages without granting concessions to their captors, and that it was gaining support in the Arab world and elsewhere for its stand.

"Our determination to bring the hijacking to a successful and speedy end remains unwavering," Secretary of State George P. Shultz told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Lebanese Shiites yesterday celebrated the Eid El Fitr feast ending the month-long Ramadan fast, and it was apparent that most of the hostages also were getting a big helping of Lebanese cooking. Amal sources said the hostages on Tuesday had been fed Lebanese-style chicken and roast beef. Amal leader Nabih Berri has said he is checking every detail of the hostages' treatment, even down to the menus.

The whereabouts of the hostages is a closely held secret, but Amal sources and Greek-born Americans freed Tuesday have indicated that most, at least, are being kept in small groups in separate apartments in the mostly Shiite southern suburbs that adjoin the Beirut airport.

Berri on Tuesday denied any knowledge that another group of Americans was being held separately after being forcibly taken from the plane Friday night because their names sounded Jewish. Amal sources have said, however, that seven such hostages were being held by the pro-Iranian Hezbollah (Party of God), an Amal offshoot that is challenging Berri for political and military leadership of Lebanon's large and ascendant Shiite community.

Amal sources have said that the hijacking was carried out by three members of Hezbollah but that 10 Amal militiamen boarded the plane Saturday during the second of its three stops in Beirut after the hijackers had beaten and shot to death a U.S. Navy diver and dumped his body on the runway.

Two young Shiites took over the flight Friday after it left Athens, Greece, with 153 people aboard. Most of the hostages were freed during stops in Beirut and Algiers. A third would-be hijacker was arrested in Greece but later freed during the weekend in return for the release of Demis Russos, a Greek folksinger, and two other hostages.

Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah, considered the spiritual leader of Hezbollah, deplored the hijacking yesterday, saying, "We have an-

nounced many times that we are not to confiscate the freedom of people who have nothing to do with the situation. ... Why put people in a corner?"

Fadlallah, speaking on the occasion of the feast at his Bir el Abed base in the southern suburbs, added, "We'd like to say to the U.S.A. ... Why do you only bring up matters of civilization when it comes to yourselves? Why don't you apply the same standards to your own actions?"

"It is no problem for Israel to come and capture our young men without any trial and without any investigation and without any right under international law. Why keep silent over this and go after something else?"

"There is a double standard in America," said Fadlallah. "Everybody sees the Americans as made of money and the Lebanese as made of mud."

Fadlallah was almost killed when a huge car-bomb devastated the neighborhood March 8, killing at least 80 people. The Washington Post reported that the bomb was placed by a team of Lebanese hired independently by Lebanese agents working under the CIA.

Berri, who also is Lebanon's justice minister and has assumed the role of mediator in the hostage situation, held no meetings during yesterday's holiday and had nothing to add to comments he made Tuesday, a spokesman said. Berri has said the status of the hostages is dependent upon Israel's continued detention near Haifa more than 700 Lebanese Shiites arrested during its three-year occupation of parts of Lebanon.

President Reagan said at a news conference Tuesday that it was his understanding that Israel had violated the Geneva conventions by moving the prisoners out of Lebanon — an assertion that has also been advanced by Berri, a lawyer turned politician, and other Lebanese leaders. Israel yesterday countered by citing an article of the fourth Geneva Convention permitting such a

transfer if the security of a civilian population or "imperative military reasons" made it "impossible to avoid."

Israel announced June 10 that it had completed its withdrawal from southern Lebanon but that about 100 specialists had remained behind to advise the Israeli-backed South Lebanese Army militia, which is to patrol a narrow border security strip. Israeli officials are saying they had planned to free all the Lebanese detainees in the next few weeks as the last direct Israeli involvement wound down.

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Israel, the United States and the International Committee of the Red Cross continued yesterday to tiptoe around the question of whether the United States would ask Israel formally and publicly to free the hostages. Israel has said it will not free the hostages under duress unless openly requested to do so by the United States, and the Reagan administration is saying it will not bend to terrorism.

The Red Cross said in Geneva that Washington had asked it to "speak with" Israel about releasing the Shiite prisoners to win the freedom of the American hostages.

Red Cross information director Alain Modoux said, though, that the neutral agency would not try to negotiate any exchange. "We have been approached by the U.S. government to speak with the Israeli government about the prisoners," Modoux said. "We were asked to make an approach to Israel on the prisoners, but it is not the mandate of the ... [Red Cross] to negotiate."

Israel has said it would be willing to meet with a Red Cross delegation.

In Algiers, Algeria revealed yesterday that its ambassador to Lebanon had met with Berri on Tuesday. Algeria helped arrange a settlement to the Iranian hostage crisis in 1981.

Berri also has met with the ambassadors of Spain, Britain and France and officials of the United Nations. He has spoken by telephone with U.S. officials in Washington.